

Reach Out

As the title 'Reach Out' might suggest, the Forseti Quartet have chosen to record contemporary works which they hope have the ability to interest as well as transcend the accustomed contemporary music listener.

'Reach Out' is also the title of the composition by the Japanese composer Dai Fujikura who was born in 1977 in Osaka. The composer, who is regarded as one of the most accomplished of his generation, completed his studies at the Trinity College of Music in London, as well as the 'Neue Music' summer course in Darmstadt. His saxophone quartet was commissioned by the Apollo Quartet in 2002 and the piece is a reflection of Fujikura's frame of mind at the time of writing. The work begins with a mostly calm atmosphere, revealing Fujikura's laid-back lifestyle of composing at home whilst carrying out the day-to-day tasks of cleaning and cooking. During this period he listened to the guitar solo from 'Sweet Child of Mine' by the band Guns N'Roses, and it is the distorted sound of the guitar which inspires the last half of the composition.

Romanian composer Violeta Dinescu moved to Germany in 1982 in order to study composition, piano and pedagogy, and since 1996 has been a professor of composition at Oldenburg University.

Dinescu has won multiple awards for her solo and chamber music works, as well as her opera and orchestral compositions. In the '3 Miniatures' for saxophone quartet, it is apparent to the listener that Dinescu has utilised traditional folk music sounds from her native Romania. Melodic and often soloistic fragments bloom, unfold, then disappear, sometimes in the briefest of moments. This is the first recording of the piece to be available on CD.

Hans Thomalla was born in 1975 in Bonn, Germany. He is Associate Professor of Composition at Northwestern University in Chicago, where he is also the Co-director of the Institute for New Music. In his own words, his works 'explore the double-bind character of music as acoustic reality as well as culturally and historically formed expression.' This short work, 'Albumblatt II' shuns conventional forms of composition. The piece develops from beginning with quiet, fragile multiphonic sounds into a final section, which has a more recognisable rhythmic structure. Throughout this progression, both the speed and volume of the piece increase to a point where the harmony totally disintegrates into a meteoric blend of noise. The piece finishes with the quietest of chords, barely discernible to the ear.

'Auswege – A Symphony for Saxophone Quartet,' is a 38 minute work by the German composer Mark Steinhäuser. By labelling the piece in this way, the composer demonstrates the connection between the intimacy of chamber music and the immensity of symphonic writing. Steinhäuser, a previous winner of the renowned 'Bernd-Alois-Zimmermann' award studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne with Johannes Fritsch who sadly passed away as the composer was writing this work. The third movement is entitled 'Le Tombeau de Johannes

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Fritsch.' One of the methods which Steinhäuser utilises is that of the spectral technique of composition. This is demonstrated in this work by the use of meandering microtones which depending on their use, create a particular clarity or sharpness. The piece follows a traditional symphonic structure, with the first movement written in sonata form. 'Auswege' was given its world premiere by the Forseti Quartet in 2011.